

## **The National Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program**

Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response; Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation; Office of Air; Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics

**Geographic location or area of activity:** 49 states and Washington, DC

**Description of activity:** In August, 2007, the National Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program (NVMSRP) marked its first year of program implementation. The goal of the NVMSRP is to provide incentives to remove mercury-containing switches from retired vehicles before they are crushed and sent to furnaces that recycle the steel. This collaborative, voluntary program prevents melted mercury from escaping the furnaces and being emitted into the air.

The primary goal of the first year of program implementation was to enlist the states to participate in the NVMSRP. This goal was accomplished and mercury switch removal programs are operational in all 50 states. (Some of these programs are state-legislated, but they use the NVMSRP infrastructure to collect and count switches. Maine was a pioneer in switch recovery programs that does not participate in the NVMSRP).

Progress is being made in the number of participants in the NVMSRP and number of switches recovered. This initial ramp up in switch recovery is evident from the data. Since August 2006, 6,351 participants voluntarily removed more than 994,742 switches containing more than 2,188 pounds of elemental mercury that would otherwise have contaminated land, air and water.

EPA has confidence in this voluntary program and has included it in its regulatory framework. The Agency included the NVMSRP as an alternative compliance option for regulating mercury emissions from certain industrial categories subject to Clean Air Act regulation.

**Interagency partners:** 49 states participate in the NVMSRP, and the Environmental Council of States is on the NVMSRP Steering Committee.

**Local partners:** The End of Life Vehicle Solutions Corporation (representing the automobile manufacturers), American Iron and Steel Institute, Steel Manufacturers Association, Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Automotive Recyclers Association, Environmental Defense, and the Ecology Center.

**Activity URL:** <http://www.epa.gov/mercury/switch.htm>, [www.elvsolutions.org](http://www.elvsolutions.org)



A collection bucket full of vehicle convenience lighting assemblies containing mercury switches that were removed under the National Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program